

Monks for his artistic excellence, his spirit of volunteerism, and his generous contributions to the history and operations of the United States Senate.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN COLOMBIA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to express my thanks to the governments of Colombia, Cuba and Norway, and to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Reverend Jessie Jackson, for their efforts to secure the release yesterday of American citizen, Kevin Scott Sutay, who was kidnapped by the FARC earlier this year. I hope this is another sign that negotiations to end Colombia's decades long armed conflict are progressing, and that a peace agreement is possible.

I also want to take this opportunity to call attention to the contributions of two courageous Colombian human rights activists, Islena Rey and Father Alejandro Angulo Novoa, and to the challenges they and other human rights defenders face.

On September 9, Colombia's Human Rights Day, both were awarded for their human rights work in a presentation organized by Di logo Inter-Agencial en Colombia, a consortium of international nongovernmental organizations working for human rights in Colombia. This is the second year of the awards, and they were presented during a time of increasing attacks against human rights defenders in that country. The awards are significant not only because they recognize the recipients' contributions, but also because they help to reduce the social stigma that surrounds human rights work in Colombia and many other countries.

Islena Rey, founder of the Meta Civic Committee for Human Rights, was named Defender of the Year for her efforts to bring together and organize community leaders in support of victims of human rights abuses. She works in one of Colombia's most dangerous regions, the Eastern Plains, which has long been plagued by violence spurred by the illegal narcotics trade.

Ms. Rey knows the risks. Four years ago this month, she was shot and seriously wounded while returning from a community meeting. She is also the sole survivor of the original Meta Committee members, who, throughout the 1990s, were systematically assassinated, leaving her to carry out her advocacy work alone. Four years after nearly losing her life, she presses on, conducting investigations, providing support to victims, and working to rebuild the Meta Committee.

In addition to recognizing Islena Rey, the organization presented Father Alejandro Angulo Novoa with the Life Long Defender award for his contributions to human rights in Colombia over the past 4 decades. Father Alejandro is one of the founders of the Center for Research and Popular Education in

Bogotá. He is currently the coordinator of CINEP's human rights database which collects, records, and disseminates information on the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. He has dedicated his life to this work and to supporting the poor and excluded.

The courage and dedication displayed by these two individuals represents just a small fraction of the essential work being done by human rights defenders in Colombia. It is all the more remarkable because, despite some notable progress in investigating, prosecuting and punishing those responsible for heinous crimes, impunity is the norm and Colombia remains a very dangerous place for lawyers, social activists, and journalists who work and report on human rights.

Islena Rey, Father Alejandro, and countless other brave Colombians will continue tending to victims of human rights abuses. They are undeterred by the social stigma they face, or the threats and acts of violence against them and their colleagues. They deserve our respect and our thanks, because the protection of human rights, wherever they are threatened or denied, is everybody's responsibility.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS PRIVACY ACT 27TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Electronic Communications Privacy Act ECPA, one of the Nation's premiere digital privacy laws, was enacted 27 years ago on October 21. I join the many privacy advocates, technology organizations, legal scholars and other Americans who celebrate this milestone and all that ECPA has come to symbolize about the importance of safeguarding our privacy rights in cyberspace.

When I introduced ECPA with former Republican Senator Charles Mathias in 1986, I said that "the privacy protections in ECPA are designed to protect legitimate law enforcement needs while minimizing intrusions on the privacy of system users as well as the business needs of electronic communications system providers." During the last three decades, ECPA has become the premier law for protecting Americans from unauthorized government intrusions into their private electronic communications.

When Congress enacted ECPA, email was a novelty and no one imagined how prevalent it would become in our daily communication let alone how long it might be stored. But after almost three decades, new technologies—such as the Internet, social networking sites and cloud computing—have changed how Americans use and store email. Storing documents and other information electronically has become much less expensive and mobile technologies permit users to access stored documents wherever and whenever they choose. As a result, the digital privacy protections put in place 27 years ago have not kept pace with new technologies.

That is why Congress must revitalize the digital privacy protections that were enacted in ECPA. That is also why I am working in a bipartisan manner to update this law to reflect the realities of our time.

In April, the Judiciary Committee favorably reported bipartisan legislation that I authored with Republican Senator MIKE LEE to update ECPA and to bring this law fully into the digital age. Our bipartisan bill updates ECPA to require that the government obtain a search warrant—based upon probable cause—before obtaining the content of our emails and other electronic communications. The commonsense reforms in our bill carefully balance the interests and needs of consumers, the law enforcement community, and our Nation's thriving technology sector. The bill enjoys the support of a diverse coalition of more than 100 privacy, civil liberties, civil rights and technology organizations from across the political spectrum, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the Heritage Foundation, the Center for Democracy and Technology and Americans for Tax Reform. The bill is also the product of careful consultation with many government and private sector stakeholders, including the Departments of Justice, Commerce and State, local law enforcement, and members of the technology and privacy communities. I remain disappointed that a single Republican Senator has objected to the unanimous consent request to pass this bipartisan bill, which overwhelmingly passed the Judiciary Committee.

The privacy reforms in this bill are too important to delay. Like Senator LEE and me, all of the bill's supporters understand that protecting our digital privacy rights is not a Democratic ideal, nor a Republican ideal, but an American ideal that all of us should embrace. As ECPA reaches another milestone, it is important to remember that Americans continue to face threats to their digital privacy. I hope that all Senators will join me in supporting the Electronic Communications Privacy Act Amendments Act and that the Senate will pass this bill without delay.

TRIBUTE TO HEDY RATNER AND CAROL DOUGAL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to thank two exceptional women who have been strong advocates for social justice and for the advancement of women's business ownership in the State of Illinois, across America, and beyond.

Hedy Ratner and Carol Dougal have recently stepped down after working 27 years as the founders and co-presidents of the Women's Business Development Center, WBDC. The WBDC is the first, and largest, nonprofit organization that provides services to encourage women's business ownership across the United States.